

Richard Turner

Monday, August 15, 2011



RICHARD TURNER 30 July 1984 – 11 August 2011

Graduated from Royal Academy of Music Jazz course in 2006

We were deeply shocked and saddened to hear the tragic news of trumpeter Richard Turner's sudden passing. A hugely talented musician and much loved personality has been taken suddenly from the jazz community and our heartfelt condolences go out to all his family and friends.

Richard was not only one of the most exciting and vibrant young trumpet players on the jazz scene, he also contributed huge amounts to the whole jazz community with his indefatigable work in promoting gigs at the Con Cellar Bar in Camden. With 'The Con' Richard forged a vital path by demonstrating how an independently established jazz venue in the basement of a pub could go on to compete with the larger established clubs. Under Richard's curatorship it became one of the most exciting and creative performance spaces with a reputation that attracted not only the best of the contemporary London bands, but also major International artists. The huge amount of work he put into this venue was undertaken with a tireless commitment as well as his trademark good humour and casual ease, providing opportunities for which a generation of musicians will always be grateful. A brilliant trumpet player, Richard achieved a great deal in the five years after graduating from the Academy - he had quickly become one of the most sought after players on the scene, having performed in many leading groups including the Mike Gibbs Big Band, and as a member of Gary Husband's band 'Drive'. Richard was a wonderful composer and bandleader in his own right, and he had only recently released an outstanding debut album with his group 'Round Trip'.

A successful jazz community relies fundamentally on the way people pull together and support one another to create innovative music and new performance opportunities. No-one did more than Richard in this direction, and he will be greatly missed. As an alumnus of the Academy jazz family we are extremely proud to have been able to count him as a member, and one whose enormous contribution whilst a student and in the years afterwards stands as an inspiration to us all.

Nick Smart
Head of Jazz, Royal Academy of Music

Photo by Guy Hatton